Chapter III. Population.

TRADERS.

Márwár Vánis.

scriptions. The Márwáris offer flowers and fruit to the gods Abu Jaipál and Hiláji, whose images they keep in their houses. Their religious doctrines are in the main the same as those of Cutch Vánis or Gujarát Jains. Infant marriage is not allowed. Girls are married at any time after twelve and boys after twenty. Polygamy is allowed and widow marriage is forbidden. The dead are burnt. Their birth death and marriage ceremonies do not differ from those of Gujarát Vánis. Social disputes are settled at meetings of adult castemen. They teach both their boys and girls to read and write Márvádi and Kánarese, but do not take to new pursuit.

WARLIKE CLASSES.

Warlike Classes included five classes with a strength of about 1000 or 0·23 per cent of the Hindu population. Of these 600 were Maráthás; 344 (males 219, females 125) Rajputs; 131 (males 123, females 8) Náyers; and 18 (males 10, females 8) Ráchevárs or Kongers.

Maráthás.

Mara'tha's number about 600 most of whom are settled in Kárwár. They have come from Ratnágiri and Sávantvádi within the last twenty years. The census returns show a total of about 35,000, but almost all of these strictly belong to the class of Marátha Kulvádis. They are divided into Sálvis, Shindes, and regular Maráthás, who eat together but do not intermarry. Some of them are wheat-coloured and some dark, and almost all are strong and well-made; the women are like the men but fairer. Their home Maráthi does not differ from the home tongue of the Sávantvádi and Ratnágiri Maráthás. They live in one-storied houses with mud walls, thatched or tiled roofs, narrow verandas, and front yards. Their staple diet is rice, vegetables, and fish; but they eat fowls, sheep, and game, and drink country liquour. They are moderate eaters, fish and spices being their chief dainties. They are good cooks. The men wear the waistcloth, the shouldercloth, and the headscarf; and the women the robe passing the skirt back between the feet and drawing the upper end over the head. They also wear a short-sleeved and backed bodice. They are hardworking, thrifty, and energetic, but selfish and cunning. Some serve as constables and messengers; others are petty shopkeepers selling grain, vegetables, and fruit. They are comparatively well-to-do, and rank next to the trading classes. The men work during the whole of the day taking three meals, and the women mind the house. The ordinary monthly expenses of a family of five are 16*s.* (Rs. 8). Their religion does not differ from that of the Konkani-speaking husbandmen of Kánara. The Maráthás have a leaning towards Shaivism, while the Kánarese-speaking husbandmen lean towards Vaishnavism. Both have a strong faith in soothsaying and ghosts. Girls are married between nine and twelve and boys between fourteen and eighteen. They employ Karháda, Konkanasth or Chitpávan, and Joishi or Havig Bráhmans to perform their marriage, puberty, and death ceremonies. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed but seldom practised. Their widows do not shave their heads and their dead are burnt. They have no regular headman, but their caste disputes are enquired into and settled by meetings of castemen whose decision is final and enforced on pain of loss of caste. They have begun to send their children to school and show themselves ready to take to new pursuits.

Rajputs, numbering 344 of whom 219 are males and 125 females, are found in small numbers in all large towns. They have come in search of employment from Central India and their home tongue is Hindustáni. The names in ordinary use among men are, Káljusing, Durgásing, Rámchandarsing, Rámprasád, Kesariprasád, Gaurishankar, Rádhákisan, and Sitárám; and among women, Rádha, Jánki, Sita, Ganga, Kási, and Lachmi. Their family stocks are Kaushik, Kaundanya, and Vatsya. Their surnames are Chohán, Pavár, Tilokchandi, and Dikkhit, and they eat and marry with the Rajputs of Central India. Most of them are married to Rajput women. Some keep either Konkani or Kánarese-speaking women, but their children by these women generally join one of the prostitute classes. They are divided into Surya-vaunshis or sun-born and Chandra-vaunshis or moon-born, and the two classes eat together and intermarry. They are wheat-coloured, tall, and muscular, with well-cut and manly features. Their home tongue is Hindustáni, which does not differ from that of the Central India Rajputs. They live in one-storied houses with mud or laterite walls and thatched or tiled roofs and front yards. The furniture includes brass lamps and a variety of metal plates and cooking and other vessels. They eat mutton and drink liquor, but their common food is wheat, clarified butter, and split pulse. They are great eaters and good cooks. The men wear the waistcloth wrapping it round the waist and binding one end tightly round each leg, a jacket, and a head-scarf. Some women wear the petticoat and others the robe without passing the skirt back between the feet; all draw the upper end across the head and face like a veil. They also wear a bodice with short sleeves and a back. Most keep costly clothes in store for holiday wear and for grand occasions, and have a large collection of silver and gold ornaments. The men wear gold ear-rings and finger-rings and a silver girdle, and the women nose-rings, ear-rings, necklaces, wristlets, anklets, waistbands, and toe-rings, the toe-rings and anklets of silver and most of the other ornaments of gold. They are hot-tempered, brave, showy, hardworking, and thrifty. They are husbandmen, constables, and petty shopkeepers, selling rice, tobacco, cocoanuts, clarified butter, currystuff, and cloth. They generally have arms in their houses and are excellent wrestlers. Some of the poorer women maintain themselves by spinning country cotton. They earn enough for a decent living. They rank next to Bráhmans though the trading classes claim superiority. They rise early, bathe in cold water, and worship their gods. They cook their food, breakfast between nine and ten, and go to work, returning by sunset and taking their second meal between seven and eight. The women do nothing but house work and never leave the house without covering their heads. The ordinary monthly expenditure of a family of five varies from 16*s.* to £1 (Rs. 8-Rs. 10). Their furniture is worth £1 to £5 (Rs. 10-Rs. 50), and their marriages cost £10 to £50 (Rs. 100-Rs. 500). They are very religious. The objects of their special devotion are Rám, Krishna, Shiv, Venkatramana, Ganpati, and Párvati. Their holidays are *Sankránt* in January; *Shimga* in February-March; *Yugádi* or New Year's day in March-April; *Ashádhi ekádashi* in June-July; *Nág-panchami* in July-August; *Shrávan Paurnima* in

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WARLIKE CLASSES.

Rajputs.

July-August; *Gokaláshtami* in August-September; *Ganesh-chaturthi* in August-September; *Dasra* in September-October; *Diváli* in October-November; and *Kártiki ekádashi* in October-November. Their spiritual Teachers are Kanoja Bráhmans to whom they pay great respect. They make pilgrimages to Gokarn in Kánara, Rámeshvar in Madura, Benares and Gaya in the North-West Provinces, Dwárka in west Káthiáwár, Kishkinda in North India, and Tirupati in North Arkot. They join in local festivals and reverence the village gods, but do not offer blood sacrifices, though they have great faith in soothsaying and witchcraft. Their girls are married between seven and eleven and their boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage is forbidden, but polygamy is allowed and practised. They mourn the dead for ten days. They do not perform regular death ceremonies in the case of boys who die before they are girt with the sacred thread or in the case of girls who die before marriage. They observe the sixteen sacraments enjoined on high class Hindus. The ceremonies are conducted by Kanoja Bráhmans and do not differ from those performed by Bráhmans. They are, puberty or *garbhádán*, pregnancy or *pumsavan*, a ceremony to secure the birth of a son known as *shimant*, a preserving or *Vishnubali* ceremony, birth or *játkarma*, naming or *námkarna*, presenting to the god or *nishkarma*, weaning *annapráshan*, head-shaving or *chaul*, thread-girding or *upanayan*, beginning Vedic learning or *mahánem*, completing Vedic learning or *mahávrit*, presenting a cow to the Bráhman instructor or *godán*, expiation for chance irregularities or *samávartan*, marriage or *viváh*, and death or *nidhan*. Their social disputes are disposed of at meetings of adult castemen. The Pardeshi or foreign families do not teach their children, but the native Rajputs or descendants of kept women teach their boys to read and write Maráthi and Kánarese.

Náyers.

Na'yers, numbering 131 of whom 123 are males and 8 females, are found in small numbers in Kumta and Sirsi. The name, of which the singular is Náyer and the plural Náymár, is the Maláyali for leader. They are not residents but pilgrims from Malabár to Gokarn in Kumta. Though they are only pilgrims some of them stay for several months and a few for some years. The eight women shown in the census seem to be Kánarese women kept by the Náyers. There are said to be no Náyer women in North Kánara. The men's names are Gopál, Náráyan, Ramana, Krishna, and Achchutam; and the women's names, Náráyaniamma, Párvatamma, Kunji, Lakshmi, and Párvatádevi. Except Náyer, which all men add to their names, they have no surnames but place names. They have no household gods, but their family deities are Bhadragáli of Kálikat and Pálghát in Malabár, Guravaya Urapan or Krishna of Kálikat, and Shastar Ayappa whose shrines are found in many villages on the Malabár coast. They belong to eleven classes or clans: Kirit or Kiran, Sudra, Charnádu, Viliam or Vilit, Vatta-Katta, Atto-Korchi, Volkutra, Volterat, Tunár, Ánador, and Torgan. The men of the three first classes eat together, and a few of the men of the first and second class marry women belonging to the second and third divisions. Their women eat only with persons of their own clans. The lower orders marry with none but their own people though all eat together if the food is

cooked by a man of the highest clan. They are well-featured, fair, tall, and strongly made. Their home tongue is Malayáli, but they can talk Kánarese though with a Malayáli accent. They have no houses of their own, generally living with Havig Bráhmans. Their common food is vegetables and rice, but they are free to use flesh except beef and pork and to drink liquor. Unlike the people of Kánara the men keep a knot of hair on the forehead and the women increase the size of the lobe of the ears by wearing heavy ornaments. The men's full dress is a thin white waistcloth called *munda* wrapped round the waist without passing the end between the legs. They also wear a shouldercloth and a white headscarf, and out of doors carry in their hands a palmyra-leaf umbrella. The women wear the *munda* like the men, leaving the bosom and the upper part of the body uncovered, except by a narrow cloth worn across the shoulder like a sash. The *munda* is so thin that an under-cloth has to be worn. They are clean, hot-tempered, lazy, and thriftless. Before the conquest of Malabár by the English the Náyers formed the militia of the country. Now some, but chiefly those of the lowest or Torgan division, are husbandmen and Government servants. In Kánara they are either physicians, astrologers, or sorcerers. The hereditary office of the first class of the Kirits or Kirans is to settle disputes among the lower classes; that of the second or Sudras to act as physicians; that of the third or Charnádus to prepare horoscopes; that of the fourth or Vilits to carry the palanquins of kings, Namburi Bráhmans, and others privileged to use palanquins; the fifth or Vatta-Kattas make oil; the sixth or Atte-Korchis pour on the heads of all Náyers when in mourning a mixture of water, milk, and cow's urine on the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth day in order to cleanse them from impurity; the seventh or Volkutras are barbers; the eighth or Volterats washermen; the ninth or Tunárs tailors; the tenth or Ánadors potters; and the eleventh or Torgans labourers. In the two higher castes certain families have the name of Nambiar. These are the children of Náyer women by Namburi Bráhmans, and, to one of these families the Malabár chiefs belong. The title of Nambiar is borne only by sons of the sisters of Nambiars whose fathers are Namburi Bráhmans. The daughters in Nambiar Náyer families take great pains to persuade Namburi Bráhmans to live with them, feeding them, clothing them, and paying them large sums of money. In old times the Nambiar families were treated with special respect and made governors of provinces and large land proprietors.

Náyers rank next to the trading classes, the Kiran being the highest and the Torgan the lowest in rank. The Torgans are held so low that when the ten higher orders happen to touch them they have to purify themselves. The Tiyers or Malayáli palm tappers, who mixed freely with the lowest classes, were cut down if they did not leave the path when they met a Náyer. The Náyers are most submissive to their superiors. They rise late and pass most of their time in talk. The monthly expenditure of a single man varies from 10*s.* to £5 (Rs. 5-Rs. 50). Though their chief deity is Vishnu, the Náyers wear the marks of Shiv and offer blood sacrifices to the local gods and goddesses who have been identified with Shiv, Vishnu, and

Chapter III. Population.

WARLIKE CLASSES. *Náyers.*

Párvati. They do not employ Bráhmans to perform their ceremonies. But the lowest order of the Namburi Bráhmans attend them for charity and are their spiritual Teachers, and their privileges are similar to those of the Vallabhácharya Maháráj́ás. They marry at a very early age, but their marriage is a mockery. Even after the girl comes of age the wife does not live with her husband, but with her parents, brothers, sisters, or next of kin, having Náyers or Bráhmans to live with her, the nominal husband allowing his wife money for ornaments, clothes, oil, and other requisites. In North Malabár near Kálikat some married women live with their husbands, who share their wives' society with Bráhmans and other men of high caste. In South Malabár near Cochin the Náyer women never live with their husbands but have lovers to live with them, Bráhmans being the most favoured. When a Bráhman takes a fancy to a Náyer girl he fastens his shouldercloth to a string at the lintel of the front door and the other hangers-on withdraw in his favour. No limit is set to the number of a Náyer woman's lovers so long as they are of high caste. Any woman caught in an intrigue with a man of the lower orders is turned out of caste. The favour of the Náyer women is much sought for by the men of their own class, many of whom lead utterly idle and improvident lives, giving up everything in the hope of winning the goodwill of some woman. In South Malabár as no Náyer can be sure that any child is his, he looks on his sister's children as his heirs and even in North Malabár where he lives with his wife the husband has less fondness for his wife's than for his sister's sons. In South Malabár the eldest woman of a family manages the house and on her death the second sister or eldest next of kin takes her place. Brothers live with their sisters, and families continue undivided for generations, as the chief cause of jealousy and division, the introduction of women of other families, is avoided. Among the Namburi Bráhmans only the eldest son is allowed to marry. The younger brothers are allowed to live with Náyer women and eat food cooked by them. In South Malabár the Náyers observe the custom of marrying all dead women either to a Bráhman or to a young cocoa-palm. This is called *táli*. The body is bathed decked with rich clothes and ornaments, and seated in a canopied chair. A Bráhman, generally one of the dead woman's lovers, is seated beside her. Their hands are joined and water is poured on them by the eldest female member of the family. In reward for the part he plays in this ceremony and on condition of performing obsequies, the bridegroom receives £5 to £50 (Rs. 50-Rs. 500) from the relations of the bride. When large sums are paid, the husband allows his beard to grow in token of mourning till he returns from Benares after throwing the bones and ashes into the Ganges. Those who cannot afford to pay for a Bráhman husband marry the corpse to a young cocoa-palm. Náyers do not wear the sacred thread but gird themselves with a hook-shaped knife called Náyer *katti* about fifteen inches long and seven broad with a wooden handle about four inches long. Boys are girt with this knife when they are about sixteen years old. They burn their dead, mourners holding themselves impure for fifteen days after a death. Náyers who wish to go direct to heaven have to visit Benares, perform

memorial ceremonies to their ancestors at Gaya, take water from the Ganges and pour it on the Shiv *ling* at Rámeshvar, and visit other holy places, washing in the Pushkarni pond at Tirupati. Social disputes are settled by meetings of castemen under the presidency of a Nambiar, each of whom is the hereditary president of a circle of villages. Serious matters are referred to Namburi Bráhmans for decision.[1]

Kongers.

Kongers or **Ra'cheva'rs,** numbering 18 of whom 10 are males and 8 females, are found in small numbers in Shiveshvar in Kárwár. They claim to be Kshatriyas, and to have come from Kongdesh or Coimbator to the south-east of Maisur. They take the word *ráya* after their names. They are said to have come to Kánara from Goa, where their ancestors took refuge during the rule of Tipu Sultán (1783-1799). Their family god is Venkatramana of Tirupati. Their stock names are Kaushik, Kaundanya, Kashyap, and Vatsya. The names in common use among men are, Shesha, Kusht, Puttu, Annu, Bhiku, Keshav, Rághoba, Jayrám, Rám, Bachi, Nal, and Trimal; and among women, Akkamma, Venkamma, Rangamma, Krishnamma, Chiliakkamma, Lakshmamma, Jáyamma, Báyamma, and Gauramma. They still eat and marry with those of their tribe who have remained in Coimbator. But they find it hard to get girls to marry their sons as their parents are unwilling to send their girls unless they are paid large sums. They are tall, brown skinned, and muscular. Their original home tongue was Tamil, and most of the elders still speak Tamil. But the present generation can talk only Konkani and Maráthi, as they have been born and brought up in Kánara among Konkani-speaking people. They live in one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched roofs. Their furniture includes brass lamps, wooden boxes, benches, straw mats, copper and earthen cooking pots, and bell-metal plates. Their staple diet is rice and fish, and they eat mutton and fowls and the flesh of wild pig and other game. They do not drink liquor. The men wear the waist-cloth, the shouldercloth, and the headscarf; and unlike the Coimbator Ráchevárs, the women wear the skirt of the robe passed back between the feet and the upper end drawn over the right shoulder. They wear a short-sleeved bodice. The men are brave but thriftless and lazy, spending the greater part of their time in dissipation. Most of them own land leasing it to tenants and living on the rent, which is seldom more than a pittance. Most of their lands are burdened with debt and the greater portion of the rent goes to pay interest. This, with their love of pleasure and their dislike to work, keeps them always in money difficulties. They rank next to the trading classes. The men spend the greater part of their time sauntering, gossipping in shop verandas, frequenting pleaders' houses to find how they can outwit their creditors, or talking to dancing-girls. Their women attend to the house and are said to be well-behaved. A family of five spends about 18*s*. (Rs. 9) a month. The men wear the sacred

[1] Accounts of the Náyers are given in Badger's Varthema, 1503, 124, 141-144; Stanley's Barbosa, 1514, 124-133; Forbes' Oriental Memoirs, 1773, I. 377-386; and Buchanan's Mysor, 1800, II. 394, 408-410, 513-514. Their courage and military skill are praised by Wilks, South of India, 1810, I. 470-473.